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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MUSHARRAF'S VISIT TO BOSNIA

Classified By: CDA Judith B. Cefkin. Reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

#### Summary

¶1. (C) During his April 27-29 state visit to Bosnia, Pakistani President General Pervez Musharraf emphasized a consistent message of interfaith harmony and tolerance and the need for Bosnia to complete the process of postwar reconstruction. Musharraf repeated this constructive message throughout his bilateral meetings in Bosnia, including at his potentially controversial visit to the graves of the victims of the Srebrenica massacre. During the visit Musharraf and Bosnian Prime Minister Nikola Spiric signed four bilateral agreements on economic cooperation. Several Serb party representatives boycotted the events surrounding the visit, a development which the Pakistani Embassy said was noticed and deeply unfortunate given Musharraf's inclusive message. The Bosnian press reported the visit factually and without using nationalist rhetoric. End Summary

¶2. (C) Pakistani President General Pervez Musharraf paid a state visit to Bosnia from April 27-29. Musharraf was accompanied by a large delegation of over fifty officials and business leaders that included Minister of Foreign Affairs Khurshid Kasuri and Senior Minister of Defense Rao Sikandar Iqbal. While in Sarajevo, President Musharraf met jointly with the three members of the Bosnian Presidency and separately with Prime Minister Nikola Spiric with whom he signed four bilateral cooperation agreements. Musharraf also delivered an address to Parliament. In addition to the events in Sarajevo, Musharraf also visited Tuzla and Srebrenica, the site of the 1995 massacre, where he laid a wreath at the Potocari cemetery for massacre victims.

#### Atmospherics

¶3. (C) During the 1992-1995 war President Musharraf served as the Director General of Operations to the UN peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. In this context Musharraf emphasized his personal connection to Bosnia and its citizens throughout his visit. Musharraf repeated a consistent message stressing the importance of interfaith harmony in a multiethnic society and post-war reconciliation and reconstruction. The Pakistani Ambassador told us that Musharraf was focused on delivering a message of tolerance directed at the Bosnian people as a whole. During his address to Parliament Musharraf emphasized that his wartime experience as a peacekeeper in Bosnia had reinforced his conviction that Bosnia could function as a viable multiethnic state and urged its citizens to uphold the principles of peaceful coexistence and cooperation to that end. He made repeated analogies to the role of religious dialogue in the global war on terror as illustrative of the importance of such cooperation. Musharraf highlighted

Bosnia's assistance to Pakistan after the 2005 earthquake as evidence of the enduring friendship between the two nations.

#### Bilateral Cooperation

14. (C) During his April 27 meeting with Prime Minister Nikola Spiric, Musharraf signed bilateral agreements on air traffic control, cooperation on armament production, and the establishment of a bilateral economic commission. Musharraf and Spiric also initialed an instrument ratifying and agreement on preventing double taxation. Musharraf reportedly took part in a private pull-aside with Bosniak Presidency member Haris Silajdzic although the Pakistani Ambassador was not present at the meeting and could provide no further details.

#### Serb Boycott

15. (U) In the period leading up to the visit, a number of Bosnian Serb representatives, most notably the right-leaning Serb Democratic Party (SDS) accused Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim) political leaders of manipulating the visit to advance their ethnic interests. Shortly before Musharraf's arrival, SDS announced that its parliamentarians would not attend Musharraf's address to Parliament. Mladen Ivanic, President of the Serb Party for Democratic Progress (PDP), and a Vice Speaker of the House of Peoples, was also absent from the session. Although members of the moderate Serb Alliance of Social Democrats (SNSD) attended the meeting, the Pakistani Embassy told us that the boycott was noticed and highly regrettable.

#### Musharraf Focus on Reconciliation

SARAJEVO 00000970 002 OF 002

16. (C) The DCM at the Pakistani Mission told us that, in addition to the specific bilateral initiatives, one of Musharraf's primary goals was to emphasize, to all constituent peoples, the need for Bosnia to move beyond its wartime past. According to the Pakistani Embassy, Musharraf was particularly careful in the planning and execution of the visit to the Potocari cemetery, a potentially explosive event given the recent Srebrenica-related controversy in the wake of the International Court of Justice verdict. He purposefully avoided any comment on the ongoing Bosniak campaign for special political status for Srebrenica, or its secession from the Republika Srpska. Musharraf was largely successful in his efforts with local media commentary focusing on the broad themes of his address and factual reporting of the visit events. Specifically, neither the Bosniak-oriented press nor Banja Luka-based outlets sought to use the visit to highlight nationalist themes on either side.

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